

REMARKS

The July 19, 2010 Official Action indicates that claims 39 – 74 are pending in the application, of which claims 50, 51, 53, 67, 68, and 70 stand withdrawn, claims 39 – 43, 52, 55 – 60, 69 and 72 stand rejected, and claims 44 – 49, 54, 61 – 66, 71, 73, and 74 stand objected to. In view of the claim amendments and comments presented herein, Applicant believes all objections and rejections to be overcome, and Applicant respectfully requests allowance of all pending claims.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

As a preliminary matter, the Examiner objected to claims 55 and 72 as being in allegedly improper form because a multiple dependent claim cannot depend on another multiple dependent claim. Applicant has amended claims 55 and 72 above to delete the phrases “having been processed according to any preceding claim” and “according to any preceding claim,” respectively. Accordingly, Applicant understands the objections to claims 55 and 72 to be overcome and requests withdrawal of such objections.

The Examiner also stated that claims 44 – 49, 61 – 66, and 73 – 74 are “objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” Applicant has amended the claims in accordance with the Examiner’s suggestions as follows.

| Old Claims | New Independent Claim | Dependent Claims |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 39, 43, and 44 | 75 | 40, 41, 42, 50 – 55 |
| 39, 43, and 45 | 76 | 46 – 49 |
| 39 and 73 | 77 | |
| 56, 60, and 61 | 78 | 57 – 59, 67 – 72 |
| 56, 60, and 62 | 79 | 63 |
| 56 and 64 | 80 | 65, 66 |
| 56 and 74 | 81 | |

Specifically, the subject matter of former claims 39, 43, and 44 form the basis for new independent claim 75, the subject matter of former claims 39, 43, and 45 form the basis for new independent claim 76, and the subject matter of former claims 39 and 73 form the basis

for new independent claim 77. Likewise, the subject matter of former claims 56, 60, and 61 form the basis for new independent claim 78, the subject matter of former claims 56, 60, and 62 form the basis for new independent claim 79, the subject matter of former claims 56 and 64 form the basis for new independent claim 80, and the subject matter of former claims 56 and 74 form the basis for new independent claim 81.

Since new independent claims 75-81 each incorporate the subject matter of a former “objected-to” dependent claim including the features of the associated base claim and all intervening claims, Applicant understands that independent claims 75-81 are allowable for at least the reasons set forth by the Examiner. All pending dependent claims are likewise allowable as depending, directly or indirectly, from one or more of allowable claims 75-81.

In addition, since all withdrawn claims, claims 50, 51, 53, 67, 68, and 70 now depend from an allowable generic base claim, Applicant respectfully requests rejoinder and allowance of such claims.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a)

In response to the Examiner’s rejection of claims 39 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Martel, Applicant has cancelled claim 39 rendering the rejection of claim 39 moot. Applicant has adjusted the dependency of claim 41 to depend from an allowable base claim as explained above.

In response to the Examiner’s rejection of claims 40, 52, 54, 56 – 58, 69, and 71 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Martel, Applicant has rewritten claims 61, 62, 64, and 74 in independent form as indicated above and cancelled claims 56, 60 – 62, 64, and 74 in turn.

With regard to the rejections of dependent claims 42 and 59 as being allegedly unpatentable over Martel in view of Niemeyer, Applicant submits that such claims are allowable as depending from an allowable base claim as argued above. As to claims 43 and 60 as being allegedly unpatentable over Martel in view of Nanbu, Applicant has canceled such claims rendering their rejection moot.

Applicant respectfully submits that all art-based rejections are overcome in view of the claim amendments presented herein for at least the reasons presented above under the heading of “claim objections.” Applicant therefore respectfully requests that all rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully requested that the amendments presented herewith be entered in this application. The amendments to the claims and accompanying remarks are believed to place the pending claims in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejections set forth in the July 19, 2010, Official Action be withdrawn and that this application be passed to issue.

If a fee is required or an overpayment is made, the Commissioner is authorized to charge or credit the deposit account of the undersigned, Account No. 04-1406.

Early and favorable action on the present application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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